

CLAIMS

1. A method to sterilise flour, comprising the steps of:
 - 5 a) providing the flour obtained from grain;
 - b) mixing the flour with alcohol;
 - c) heating the mixture of flour and alcohol, under closed conditions, to a temperature above 78 °C; and
 - d) obtaining a flour product having a reduced enzyme activity and microbial
 - 10 contamination without gelatinisation of the starch part of the flour.
2. The method according to claim 2, wherein the alcohol content in b) is less than 20 % (weight/volume) of the total mixture.
- 15 3. The method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the temperature in c) is between 78 °C and 120 °C.
4. The method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the temperature in c) is maintained from about 1 second to about 5 hours.
- 20 5. The method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the closed conditions in c) is under pressures held between from about 1 to about 5 bars.
6. The method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the flour is obtained
- 25 from maize, rice and cereals such as wheat, oats, barley and rye.
7. A flour product obtained by the method according to any of the preceding claims.
8. An aseptically packed fluid mixture comprising;
 - 30 a) the flour product according to claim 7 and
 - b) a sterile fluid phase,
 - wherein the starch of the flour remains in a non-gelatinised condition after packaging.
- 35 9. The aseptically packed fluid product according to claim 8, wherein the product comprises a hydrocolloid such as xanthan gum or carragenan, synthetic, semisynthetic hydrocolloids or mixtures thereof.

10. A method to produce an aseptically packed fluid according to any of the claims 8-9 comprising the steps of:
- a) providing and sterilising a fluid phase;
 - b) providing and sterilising flour separately from the fluid phase;
 - 5 c) Mixing the fluid phase and the flour product aseptically or sterile to a fluid mixture; and
 - d) Aseptically or sterile pack the fluid mixture, where the starch of the flour remains in a non-gelatinised condition after the treatment.
- 10 11. The method according to any of the claims 10, wherein a hydrocolloid such as xanthan gum or carragenan, synthetic, semisynthetic hydrocolloids or mixtures thereof is added to the fluid mixture under c).